



SOCIAL SERVICES NEWS

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DISTRACTED DRIVING VIDEO CONTEST WINNERS ANNOUNCED

HICKORY -- The winners of the 2012 Distracted Driving Video Contest were announced at a Red Carpet event held at The Green Room in Newton.

A team of students from Hickory High School's Student Council won the Grand Prize. The team included Will McCarrick, Anne Orgain, Taylor Panzer and Lexie Reeves. Their video, "Do You Drive Distracted?", was judged the best by a panel of judges. The faculty adviser of the team was Cameron Grace, an English teacher who advises the Student Council. The Grand Prize consists of \$100 plus a limousine ride courtesy of Action Limousine and lunch at The Olive Garden restaurant.

The second place video was "Distracted Driving Costs Lives" by St. Stephens High School. Students on the team included Johnny Dellinger, Brenton Harris and Alex Lail. This team won \$75.

The third place video was "Distracted Driving" by Bandys High students Katti Buff-Allen, Alex Saunders and Megan Setzer. This team won \$50.

Winner of the Viewer's Choice Award was "Don't Become a Statistic" by Maiden High students Landon Coleman, Lindsay Klinck, Damian Puckett and Matthew Smrzlick. This award was based on the number of votes the video received on Facebook. The team won \$50.



A team from Hickory High School's Student Council won this year's Grand Prize in the Distracted Driving Video Contest. From left to right are Taylor Panzer, Will McCarrick, Cameron Grace (advisor), Lexie Reeves, and Anne Orgain

This is the second year of the contest, sponsored by the Distracted Driving Video Contest Committee in collaboration with the Catawba County Youth Council and Sig Holcomb with State Farm Insurance. The contest was open to all high school students in Catawba County.

Students were asked to create a video, no longer than 90 seconds, that illustrated the dangers of distracted driving, which could include eating, texting, talking on the phone, putting on makeup, reading or other activities that might distract a driver.

A special guest at the Red Carpet event was Tammy Garloch, a Charlotte woman whose son, Brian, died as a result of distracted driving at age 17. He was making a phone call while attempting to make a left turn across four lanes of traffic. His car was struck by two pickup trucks. He was rushed to the emergency room, where he died two hours later. Since her son's death in 2008, she has spoken to more than 15,000 students to help raise awareness about the dangers of distracted driving.

"We want to remind drivers of all ages how quickly things can go wrong," she said. "We never thought it would happen to us -- until it did." She gave all the students black and pink bracelets to remind them of the dangers of distracted driving.

The videos in this year's and last year's contest may be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/user/DistractedDriving>. For additional information about the contest, and to see photos of this year's Red Carpet awards ceremony, go to <http://www.facebook.com/#!/DistractedDrivingVideoContest>.

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